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Senate Republicans: ‘Enough said, let’s get to work!’

LANSING – Sen. Cameron S. Brown, R-Fawn River Township, said he was encouraged to hear the governor’s commitment to work with Republicans on creating jobs and spurring Michigan’s economy, and protecting our children during her State of the State Address Tuesday night.

In her address, the governor touched on legislation that has been introduced to restrict extremely violent video game access to children.

“I do applaud the governor for standing up against the prevailing pop culture of our day that has such a negative influence on our families,” Brown said. “Nothing we do in the Legislature to improve our quality of life will have any effect if we lose our children. It is important that public officials speak up and out about the violence and other disturbing messages that are streaming into our family rooms through televisions and radios.”

Senate Republicans renewed their pledge to fight for every Michigan job and said they stand ready to work with the governor to accomplish what is best for Michigan residents.

“It was a good performance, but the specifics were pretty lean,” Brown said.

While the nation’s economic recovery is well underway, families in Michigan are still facing the prospect of an unemployment check instead of a regular paycheck.

In 2004, Michigan was the only state with a net job loss. Michigan and one other state had the highest unemployment rates in the nation at 7.3 percent in December; nearly two percent above the national unemployment rate.

The governor’s proposal on allowing the state to invest \$2 billion in bond money sends up some major red flags to Senate Republicans. Borrowing money for ongoing operating expenses is not a solution to the problem and could create legal issues.

The GOP vision for Michigan includes providing a job opportunity for anyone who wants to work and support their family. It includes a great education for every student and affordable health care for families and senior citizens.

“It’s not enough to talk about a vision without taking action to make it a reality,” said Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema. “We’ve seen what happens when a governor waits two years for things to get better on their own. We’re tired of waiting and the people of Michigan are tired of seeing jobs pour out of this state.”

Brown agreed, citing the “New Economy” legislative initiative recently announced by Senate Republican members. The package is focused on improving Michigan’s economy by boosting the state’s high-tech sector.

While Michigan has made major investments in life sciences over the past four years, the state is not truly reaping the economic benefits of that investment. A 2004 study ranked Michigan 37th in the nation in risk capital and infrastructure, just above states like Wyoming, Kansas, Iowa and Montana, whose economies rely heavily on natural resources.

Unveiled last week, Republicans plan to introduce the legislation in the coming weeks, as well as legislation designed to improve agriculture across the state of Michigan.

“The governor has placed a lot of state money on the table, and my concern is that it raises an expectation we can’t meet,” Brown said.

Brown said some of the governor’s proposals outlined in her speech have merit, but he needs to see details, not just general ideas.

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